

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

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FM AMCONSUL HAMILTON

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 1592

C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMILTON 159

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, BD

SUBJ: DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY US NAVAL AIR STATION
(USNAS) BERMUDA

REF: HAMILTON 21 AND 53, CONFERENCE PENTAGON FEB. 19,
TELCON MAY 10 FLOYD/MCCUE

1. GOB NOW PREPARED TO DISCUSS INFORMALLY POSSIBLE RETURN TO
GOB OF CAUSEWAY, LONGBIRD BRIDGE/FERRY REACH (KINDLEY ROAD).
THEY PROPOSE OPEN DISCUSSIONS JULY 23 AT CABINET LEVEL. WE
INTEND, UNLESS DEPARTMENT DIRECTS OTHERWISE, TO ATTEND AND TO

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LISTEN TO THEIR PROPOSITIONS. WE WILL BE REPRESENTED BY CG.,
CONAS, AND NASJAG. MEETING WILL BE EXPLORATORY AND NO
COMMITMENT EXPECTED EITHER SIDE.

2. GOB HAS ALSO REQUESTED A DATE FOR OPENING GENERAL FORMAL
DISCUSSION ON BALANCE OF LAND WHICH MIGHT BECOME AVAILABLE,
I.E., PORTION OF NAVAL ANNEX AND SEVERAL SMALL PIECES
ELSEWHERE. SEE PAGE 15 AND 16 ANNEX PROGRESS REPORT I, A NEW
PERSPECTIVE USNAS BERMUDA, 11 APRIL 1974 ITEMS 2(A), 2(B), AND
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2(C). GOB WOULD LIKE TO MAKE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE IT

LEAKS TO PRESS. HOWEVER IT APPEARS THIS NOT POSSIBLE IN VIEW OF OPENING LIMITED INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS JULY 23.

3. IT OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT ANY FORMAL DISCUSSIONS REQUIRE (A) AGREEMENT BETWEEN USG AND UKG TO UNDERTAKE SUCH DISCUSSIONS AND FOR UKG THROUGH GOVERNOR TO AUTHORIZE BERMUDA TO DO SO FOR UK; (B) FOR DEPARTMENT TO AUTHORIZE CG TO DO SO TOO FOR US AND (C) APPROVAL OF NEGOTIATION PLAN (SCENARIO) PP 16 THROUGH 19 OF ANNEX PROGRESS REPORT I CITED IN PARA 2 ABOVE. FYI: WE HAVE BEEN TOLD ON QT THAT THE "REPORT" HAS BEEN APPROVED BY DOD AND IS NOW IN CINCLANTFLEET, NORFOLK AWAITING APPROVAL MOVEMENT DOWNWARD TO USNAS BERMUDA. WE

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ARE ALSO INFORMED COMNAVIAIRLANT NORFOLK, THE INTERVENING HEAD-QUARTERS BETWEEN CINCLANT AND NAS HAS APPROVED THE PLAN.

4. IN FORTHCOMING MEETING WE INTEND KEEP ALL DISCUSSIONS ON REAL ESTATE AND FACILITIES ON INFORMAL BASIS GIVING US FLEXIBILITY TO EXAMINE ALL FACETS OF PROBLEMS INVOLVED. BACK LEASE OF ANNEX LAND DEPENDENT ON QUID PRO QUO FROM GOB HOPEFULLY INCLUDING THEIR ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR LONGBIRD BRIDGE/CAUSEWAY AND TRANSFER TO US OF SOME LAND CONTIGUOUS/ADJACENT TO AIR STATION.

5. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT GOB OWNS RELATIVELY LITTLE LAND ON EASTERN END OF ISLAND PRINCIPALLY SCATTERED SMALL PARCELS AND A FEW LARGER TRACTS UNAVAILABLE DUE TO SCHOOL USE AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL PURPOSES. GOB HAS NOW ASKED HOW MUCH LAND USG MIGHT REQUIRE NEAR THE AIR STATION. GOB INDICATED THEY MAY CONSIDER EXCHANGING OTHER GOB LAND WITH PRIVATE OWNERS OR BUYING UP ACREAGE NEAR AIR STATION. ADDITIONALLY, GOB MIGHT MOVE THEIR GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS ELSEWHERE FREEING UP LAND FOR NAVY USE.

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6. AT SAME TIME, WE NEED TO ASCERTAIN IF GOB HAS ANY CONFIDENTIAL

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REAL IMMEDIATE NEED FOR ANNEX PROPERTY. OUR HUNCH IS THAT THEY DO NOT FROM LAND UTILIZATION ASPECT. HOWEVER, RETURN OF LAND TO GOB WHICH GOVERNMENT PARTY HAS PRIED LOOSE FROM THE US TENACIOUS GRASP, LAND WHICH NORMALLY THEY COULD NOT EXPECT RETURNED PRIOR TO 2041, WOULD BE A POLITICAL ASSET OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE. FURTHER IT WOULD STILL OR AT LEAST OFFSET THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S CLAMOR FOR THE RETURN OF "OUR LAND".

MCCUE

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